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Wednesday, 17 July 2002, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Sir Jeremy Greenstock	(United Kingdom)
Members:	Bulgaria	Mr. Tafrov
	Cameroon	Mr. Ngoh Ngoh
	China	Mr. Zhang Yishan
	Colombia	Mr. Ocaziones
	France	Mr. Doutriaux
	Guinea	Mr. Camara
	Ireland	Mr. Ryan
	Mauritius	Mr. Koonjul
	Mexico	Mrs. Arce de Jeannet
	Norway	Mr. Brattskar
	Russian Federation	Mr. Zaemsky
	Singapore	Ms. Lee
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Mekdad
	United States of America	Mr. Williamson

Agenda

The situation in Angola

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02-48269 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Angola

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Kenzo Oshima, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. Oshima to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

At this meeting the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Kenzo Oshima, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator.

May I remind the Council that the background to this meeting is that the Council continues to await with great interest the report by the Secretary-General following the recent inter-agency mission to Angola. Since that report has been held up, the Council recently agreed with the Secretary-General's recommendation that the mandate of the United Nations Office in Angola should be rolled over for one month upon its expiry on 15 July. We expect that a full discussion of Angola will be arranged by the United States presidency in August in good time for the new mandate renewal date.

But given the urgency of the humanitarian situation, Council members felt that it would be useful to have a briefing from Mr. Oshima, who has also visited Angola recently, without waiting for the fuller discussion next month. Mr. Oshima has kindly found time in a very busy schedule. We will not be able to detain him more than about an hour, but I hope that following his initial presentation, there will be time for a brief question-and-answer session. Those Council members who wish to take the floor in that sense should so indicate to the Secretariat from now on.

I give the floor to Mr. Oshima.

Mr. Oshima: I thank the Security Council for once again providing me with an opportunity to brief the Council on the latest humanitarian situation in Angola. I have just returned from a mission to Angola and southern Africa. In southern Africa, I visited three of the several countries affected by the looming hunger crisis — Zimbabwe, Malawi and Zambia. Tomorrow, here in New York, we are organizing a launch of national appeals for emergency assistance on behalf of the six countries affected.

During my visits, I had the company of senior officials from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Food Programme (WFP). We travelled together so that we could develop an integrated overview of the situation — not just from a humanitarian, but also a reconstruction and development perspective. Ms. Julia Taft, Director of the Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery at UNDP, was part of the mission. If members agree, she is also available to answer questions today.

Our mission to Angola followed the earlier, broad-based, mission led by Mr. Ibrahim Gambari to assess and consult with the Government on the role and structure of the United Nations presence in Angola in the light of the new situation.

The purpose of my humanitarian mission was twofold: first, to assess the situation on the ground first-hand, and ensure that effective aid coordination is in place and, secondly, to discuss a set of key issues with the Government, including burden-sharing and strategies for return and resettlement of internally displaced persons, including UNITA combatants and their families.

In addition to meetings in Luanda with key Government ministers, the donor community and humanitarian partners, including non-governmental organizations (NGOs) active on the ground, we made an informative field trip to the town of Kuito in Bié province, which is one of the hardest-hit locations in the country.

I have drawn three main conclusions from my mission. First, the Government of Angola and the United Nations and its partners have a unique

opportunity to create a new partnership to address both humanitarian needs and reconstruction and development issues. That opportunity should be seized with renewed effort and commitment; it is important to develop the appropriate framework for the partnership.

Secondly, the Government is working hard to make the agreement set out in the 4 April Memorandum of Understanding hold. It is looking to the future and is already planning for rehabilitation and reconstruction; it appears ready to increase the share of spending for the social sector. Should that become a reality, I believe that it will be complemented by significant donor support.

Thirdly, the humanitarian community will have to continue with massive lifesaving interventions for the short term. In particular, return and resettlement strategies for internally displaced persons — especially UNITA combatants and their families — are quickly becoming a major challenge. Helping displaced people to return home and to re-establish a productive life will be critically important in the consolidation of peace. To carry out those activities immediately, we need a significant step-up of donor support.

The overall situation in Angola has changed dramatically since I last briefed the Council, in February. The ceasefire established by the Memorandum of Understanding is holding; the peace process seems to be irreversible. The people of Angola are to be commended for that momentous achievement. The resulting improvements in humanitarian access to many locations in the interior have had significant positive consequences for the population.

However, the humanitarian situation in many parts of the country continues to be dire. The enormous needs of large parts of the population — inter alia, for food, water, shelter and health care — require an urgent and massive response. Despite the overall positive developments, the people most affected by the war have yet to see a significant peace dividend.

When the Memorandum of Understanding was signed, in early April, approximately 1.9 million vulnerable people were receiving assistance from the international community. As soon as conditions permitted after the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding, United Nations agencies, the Government and NGO partners immediately conducted rapid needs assessments in previously inaccessible areas, particularly in newly created family reception areas. Those rapid assessments resulted in the identification of an additional 1 million or so people who are in need of emergency assistance — namely, approximately 800,000 people in newly accessible areas, plus an estimated 220,000 family members of UNITA combatants, assembled in 31 of the 35 family areas. In other words, altogether, the United Nations and its partners are now targeting approximately 3 million people — almost one quarter of Angola's entire population — in vulnerable situations.

The ongoing humanitarian relief operation in Angola is one of the largest in the world, with more than 400 national and international NGOs and 10 United Nations agencies involved in the effort. I should mention that I was greatly impressed by the tireless efforts of the humanitarian community in Angola to respond to both the existing and the newly found caseload. Those efforts are truly commendable. At the same time, it was very clear to me that they are painfully overextended and seriously underfunded. Funding for food, health care, water, sanitation and agricultural support is urgently required. The United Nations 2002 Consolidated Appeal for Angola requested $233 million. To date, just $81 million — or 35 per cent of the funds requested — has been granted. Underfunding, therefore, is now the major constraint on humanitarian action.

Looking ahead, the major challenge for the humanitarian community will be the return and resettlement of internally displaced persons. According to the Government, up to 4 million people — a third of the population — are internally displaced. The Government has made return and resettlement a major priority. According to the Government's plan, up to 500,000 people could be resettled by the end of the year. When I visited camps for internally displaced persons in the city of Kuito, I learned that some people were already beginning to leave the camps and to return spontaneously to their home areas. Humanitarian organizations are working, on a priority basis, with provincial authorities to develop plans to facilitate return and resettlement before the next planting season, in mid-August. That needs to be actively supported, for obvious reasons.

I should remind the Council that return and resettlement will need to occur in accordance with the principle of voluntary return — as opposed to that of forcible return — and with full attention to protection

needs. In that regard, the Council will recall that Angola is at present the leading country in the world to have enshrined in national legislation the guiding principles on internally displaced persons developed by the Representative of the Secretary-General for Internally Displaced Persons, Mr. Francis Deng. That is commendable. The United Nations is working closely with the Government to ensure that those rules are put into practice at the provincial as well as the national level.

In that connection, I should also like to note that mine action will play a major part in facilitating safe return and resettlement. Humanitarian access remains hampered by extensive mine infestation. With support from the international community, the Government must take the lead and redouble its efforts with regard to demining activities. Here, I should like to mention that the Government of Angola recently ratified the Ottawa Convention on anti-personnel landmines, which is a step in the right direction on which the Government should be congratulated.

I should emphasize that the situation of the ex-UNITA combatants and their family members who are currently assembled in the quartering areas and the family reception areas requires priority attention, for obvious reasons. They are currently receiving emergency assistance from the Government, from United Nations agencies and from NGOs, but that is not enough. Increased effort in that sector is urgently needed. Moreover, after 20 July, responsibility for these areas will shift from the military to the newly founded Commission for National Reintegration. It remains to be seen whether the Commission has the necessary resources and capacity to cope with the challenge. That situation will require careful monitoring.

As I mentioned earlier, one of the purposes of my mission was to discuss with the Government ways in which we could improve our working relationship in the light of the new situation. In our discussions, the Government confirmed that it has the primary responsibility to provide assistance and protection to its own people. But, clearly, the problems and tasks facing the Government are of an overwhelming nature, and the Government indicated that it would ask for help from the United Nations and from the international community to meet the momentous tasks and responsibilities at hand. At the same time, we are talking about a country that is richly endowed with oil and other natural resources. There is an expectation in the international community that the Government should be able to assume a greater share of the burden in meeting the needs of its own people.

Moreover, now that the war has ended, the people of Angola deserve a peace dividend. There is an expectation that it should come from within the country, because it has the means for this, even while the international community should come in to complement the Government effort. The current situation can, and must, be turned into an opportunity. This will occur if the United Nations and the Government create a new and equitable partnership in the area of humanitarian and development assistance. There is an expectation that this partnership will be based on the concepts of burden-sharing and transparency.

We would hope that the Government will step up its efforts to fulfil many of the commitments that have already been made, as well as the new commitments we expect will be made. Many donors have expressed their concern and stressed that visible burden-sharing, transparency and the fulfilment of those commitments are essential. I raised these issues with the Government. I trust they will do their utmost to meet these expectations.

Additionally, there are a number of steps the Government can take on their own to facilitate ongoing humanitarian activities. They include repairing road and bridge infrastructure to enable cheaper deliveries by road, expediting customs clearance for humanitarian goods, maintaining the tax-free status of humanitarian goods, and simplifying visa requirements for international humanitarian workers. I raised these issues with the Government and urged their prompt attention to them.

In the light of the changed circumstances and the additional needs created, as I have mentioned, there is a need to revise the Consolidated Appeal for Angola for international donor support. I have already briefed the donor community in Geneva and here in New York. Concurrently, in Angola the United Nations country team is working with the Government, donors and non-governmental organizations to identify the additional funding needed to meet the increased requirements, with the aim of revising the Consolidated Appeal, which should be ready for launch at the end of this month. I would ask Council members and other

Member States to be generous in their support of this new appeal for Angola.

Despite the enormous challenges over recent years, the humanitarian effort in Angola saved the lives of many in the midst of tragedies. I think we have here something that we can further build on. More importantly, we must pay tribute to the people of Angola, who have demonstrated incredible resilience and are now ready to build new lives. Meeting the urgent needs for humanitarian assistance in Angola will require the concerted efforts of the United Nations, its partners, donor Governments and the Government of Angola. With such efforts, I hope that the international community can help the people of Angola consolidate their hard-won peace and national reconciliation and help them move into normalcy, which will allow for the reconstruction and development of the country.

The President: I extend warm thanks to the Emergency Relief Coordinator for his briefing and for the fact sheets and other details that he has given us in writing.

In case members of the Council were wondering, we have received no requests from the delegation of Angola to be at the Council table at this meeting. Could I just check whether there is a representative of Angola at the side of the Council Chamber? I see that there is a representative of the delegation here.

The floor is now open for those who want to put brief comments and questions.

Mr. Brattskar (Norway): I would like to thank Mr. Oshima for his very useful briefing.

Norway commends the Government of Angola for having taken some positive steps to meet the humanitarian needs of the country after the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding. However, more needs to be done, and the Government must assume increased responsibility and leadership in meeting the huge humanitarian needs of its population. Above all, the Government must take the lead in preparing for the huge return and resettlement operation by prioritizing the reconstruction of infrastructure such as roads, airstrips and bridges.

As we have heard from Mr. Oshima, Angola is facing enormous challenges in mine clearance. My Government commends the Government of Angola for its decision to ratify the Landmine Treaty and urges the authorities to resolve the existing institutional difficulties and to provide resources for mine-action programmes throughout the country. Moreover, the agencies operating in Angola must be urged to integrate demining activities into the overall aid programmes. This is, above all, an important means to prepare for the return of the huge numbers of refugees and internally displaced persons.

Norway is impressed by the efforts currently being made by the United Nations, and in particular by the role played by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in its capacity as humanitarian coordinator. We wish to encourage OCHA and other agencies to continue working for improved transparency and dialogue with the Government regarding humanitarian relief activities.

Allow me also to underline the need for urgent funding and humanitarian assistance to address the emergency situation affecting many quartering areas and newly accessible locations. I would like to ask Mr. Oshima whether we still have a problem with locations that are not accessible for assistance.

On our part, we have responded to the humanitarian crisis by providing supplementary funding through UNICEF and the humanitarian coordinators in the quartering areas. Further donations will be made available as soon as the Coordinated Appeal is presented.

We very much look forward to discussing the upcoming report by the Secretary-General containing recommendations as to the mandate of the United Nations operation in Angola. Meanwhile we will encourage the Government of Angola and UNITA to continue the implementation of the peace plan in a manner aimed at consolidating a stable and peaceful environment, thereby establishing the conditions for national reconciliation and long-term social and economic development in the country.

The President: We have got several speakers. Could you please try to aim at a maximum of three minutes in your interventions.

Mr. Koonjul (Mauritius): Let me, first of all, thank Under-Secretary-General Kenzo Oshima for his excellent briefing this morning. It has been extremely useful and very comprehensive.

The situation in Angola is at a very crucial stage at this point. After the signing of the peace memorandum, the country is about to start with a

reconstruction programme. At the same time, it is also faced with a severe humanitarian situation stemming from the return of UNITA troops, internally displaced persons and refugees. Certainly, this is a situation in which the country needs the utmost assistance.

We agree with Mr. Oshima's remarks that it is the primary responsibility of the Government of Angola to take care of its people. We agree fully with that. But, as he has pointed out himself, the situation is overwhelming at this point. This is the time when the country will require all the efforts necessary from the international community to face up to the that situation. We therefore believe that there is a need for very close cooperation between all the donors and the Government of Angola to enhance the capacity of the Angolan Government to face the problem it is having.

Obviously, we will have an opportunity to discuss all other matters when we receive the report of the Secretary-General. At this point in time, we think that there are certain issues which need to be emphasized. One is the need to look at the problem of the return and the resettlement of the internally displaced persons and the refugees. We note that there are approximately 4 million people involved, which is almost a third of the population of Angola.

Minister Brattskar has talked about the need for mine clearance. I think we should be able to discuss that problem when we discuss the report of Ambassador Gambari. It is absolutely important that the country be cleared of the mines in order to enable the refugees and the internally displaced persons to return to their normal functions.

We believe that there is also a need for humanitarian aid workers to have access to all areas, without hindrance. We have read some reports that there are certain areas which were not accessible because of the behaviour of certain people. I also note that the Government of Angola has recently decided to relieve one of governors of his functions. I do not know if Mr. Oshima can shed some light on whether that will help to provide humanitarian aid workers with the necessary access to certain areas. There is also the major problem of infrastructure — the lack of airstrips — which is also preventing aid from reaching the people most in need.

Despite the fact that the country has the ability and potential to come to the aid of its people, we think that this is the time when the international community should make a very special effort to assist the country to try to resolve this pressing problem, because the people of Angola deserve to see the dividends of peace. We fear that if we do not do it at this time, the situation may be reversed. We look forward to the report from Ambassador Gambari, and we hope to be able to discuss further the needs of Angola.

Mr. Ryan (Ireland): We are very grateful, indeed, to Mr. Oshima for his briefing and for the information material provided. It has been more than five months since the Council discussed the humanitarian situation in Angola. Given the important developments, this update is therefore very timely and very welcome.

The Angolan people now have the best opportunity in decades to begin a process of normalization. However, the new developments present huge new challenges of the sort detailed by Mr. Oshima. There are immediate needs that must be addressed now, and others that require a more deliberate approach over a longer time. The urgent nutritional and medical requirements of the population obviously cannot wait and must be dealt with immediately. We commend Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the other United Nations agencies for their work in that respect, alongside the community of non-governmental organizations.

The resettlement of internally displaced persons will be an enormous humanitarian operation. It goes without saying that the process must be completed with the consent of the internally displaced persons themselves. It will present an enormous human challenge and will raise important issues regarding the status of rights to land.

We share Mr. Oshima's concern about the scale and the urgency of demining action. In this regard, we very much welcome decision by the Government of Angola to ratify the Ottawa Convention.

Angola is the second-largest recipient of Ireland's emergency and humanitarian funding and will continue to be a priority for us. The humanitarian operation in Angola is now one of the largest in the world. The situation on the ground demands it. Yet the new circumstances suggest that the limited approach pursued over past years must now change. The international community and the Government must work together to map the best way forward. Mr. Oshima's stress on the need for burden-sharing will

find support among many donors and — we very much hope — with the Government of Angola.

There is an enormous humanitarian deficit in Angola which cannot be bridged without the assistance of the international community. The donor community can reasonably be expected to commit to further humanitarian support and action if it sees evidence of the systematic diversion of greatly increasing State revenues from natural resources into programmes to rebuild Angola for the people of Angola, the natural owners of those resources. We make the case that this should be done not only for the welfare of the people — the clear and absolute first priority — but also to strengthen the perceived legitimacy of Angola's institutions and State structures. We commend this message to the Government of Angola through its representatives here in the Council Chamber today.

I would like to ask Mr. Oshima two brief questions. Given the importance of agriculture, which he has highlighted, does the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) have a sense of the extent to which agricultural land is mined and therefore of the scale of the problem which we face in getting people back to the land to begin the urgent planting to ensure future food stocks? Secondly, I wonder whether Mr. Oshima can give the Council an idea of the sort of time frame that a resettlement programme would require, given the enormous numbers involved and the infrastructure and resource deficits that prevail at present.

The President: The delegation of Angola has now asked to participate in the discussion. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Gaspar Martins (Angola) took a seat at the Council table.

Mr. Williamson (United States): We recognize the excellent work that the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has done in Angola, coordinating humanitarian assistance and responding to overwhelming needs. The United States has been gratified to work alongside OCHA in an active response to Angola's humanitarian crisis. The United States has already delivered, or committed to providing, 97,000 metric tonnes of food and $2 million worth of non-food commodities, airlifted to family-quartering areas. This brings United States humanitarian assistance to Angola for the current fiscal year to $100 million. We are committed to working with the Government of Angola, United Nations agencies and other donors to coordinate our priorities and next steps, both for immediate humanitarian needs and for broader issues such as the resettlement of internally displaced persons, former combatants and returning refugees.

We look for the Government of Angola to provide leadership by committing to the welfare of its people. Donors cannot provide enough for all of Angola's needs. But Angola is different from most other countries in Southern Africa facing severe humanitarian crises because it is blessed with resources to care for its own citizens. We urge Angola quickly to direct significant resources to internal relief needs as the international community continues to assist it.

Finally, let me briefly touch on the important political dynamic because it has a huge impact on humanitarian aid, as pointed out by the emergency humanitarian coordinator, Mr. Oshima, and as issues raised by earlier speakers make clear. There was a dramatic shift in February, for which the Government of Angola has adjusted. Yet we still await the Secretary-General's report, recommending United Nations strategy to be adopted. Whether it is mine-clearing, dealing with UNITA ex-combatants and their families, et cetera, the delay only hurts the people in Angola. We look forward with great anticipation for the Secretariat to share their vision with us so that the suffering people deserving of assistance can be helped.

Mr. Mekdad (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): First, I would like to thank Mr. Kenzo Oshima and say how very much we appreciate his comprehensive and very informative briefing. We thank him for the recommendations and the very specific information given in the report.

There are some goods signs regarding the development of the political process in Angola. We believe that this is basically due to the sincere efforts of the Government of Angola itself to restore peace and stability in the country, which has suffered all too long.

The return of a large number of refugees — about 10,000 people in recent months — and the plans that have been made to ensure the return of even greater numbers of them deserve the full support of, and follow-up by, the international community. Likewise, the Government's mine-clearance programme, which is very costly, as we all know, should also be a priority and receive the full support of the international community.

We believe that investing in the restoration of peace and stability in Angola will have a positive impact on the peace process and on the region in general. This point was touched on in Mr. Oshima's briefing, in particular with respect to certain measures that the Angolan Government is expected to take.

We believe that three of these trends reflect certain economic aspects, and that they require, as we mentioned earlier, greater support from the international community. Repairing roads, exempting certain goods from customs duties, even when this is limited to those supplied by humanitarian agencies, and speeding up the customs control process — all of these measures require resources, and hence support must be given to the country so that it can complete all of its tasks.

A fourth aspect concerns the simplification of the entry visa requirements for international agencies. We believe that the Government of Angola recognizes that it is in its best interests to facilitate these procedures. But have these aspects have been discussed directly with the Angolan Government, and what was its reaction to these aspects?

Once again, we would like to thank Mr. Oshima for having paid a visit to the country. We know that the conditions of the visit were very difficult, and we all appreciate the efforts that his Office is making to provide support to all people in dire straits in that country.

Mr. Doutriaux (France) (*spoke in French*): We agree on every point with Mr. Oshima's briefing. My Government had also dispatched a humanitarian mission to Angola at approximately the same time as Mr. Oshima's visit to the country, and we agree with his conclusions.

The humanitarian situation is still a source of concern, despite the hopes generated by the peace process that is currently under way. Therefore the efforts of the international community must be sustained, but, as Mr. Oshima said, this must be done in very close partnership with the Angolan authorities, which must commit themselves to working to assist the Angolan population.

My country has decided to double our contribution to the World Food Programme, whose activities in Angola have been widely recognized. We will be helping also to equip health-care facilities and to assist with temporary schooling for children in the Sambo quartering area, the most crowded and isolated UNITA army reception area in the Wambo region.

As Mr. Oshima and other speakers have noted, a serious problem remains: resettling 4 million internally displaced persons. We note, as Mr. Oshima mentioned, that the Angolan Government and UNITA have decided to work together for peace, a decision that should facilitate the process of resettling internally displaced persons.

France will also provide 2 million euros to support integrated projects in that area, especially in the Malanje and Wambo areas. The French Foreign Minister will visit the Wambo region next weekend, in the context of an official visit by my Minister to Angola.

Like other delegations, we are looking forward to the upcoming report by the Secretary-General, on the basis of Mr. Gambari's expertise, on the role of the United Nations in supporting and sustaining the peace process.

Mr. Ocazionez (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation is grateful for Mr. Oshima's briefing to this meeting of the Council.

The picture of the humanitarian situation in Angola that he has painted continues to present some disturbing aspects. We feel deeply the suffering undergone by the people of Angola, and we share their hopes for a better future. We also greatly admire the dedicated efforts of the humanitarian organizations that are working there, including United Nations agencies, which are striving to help rebuild individual lives, families and an entire country.

After hearing the statement made by the representative of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, it is clear to us that, at this particular stage of the return of peace to Angola, the humanitarian needs of its population have grown

immensely. Those needs were always great, but the conditions of war have prevented the international community from determining the true magnitude of those needs. Even today they cannot be accurately assessed, because mined land and destroyed roads make it impossible to carry out a complete appraisal of the situation.

However, my delegation takes that view that, as Mr. Oshima has noted, the international community now has an opportunity to show Angola and the rest of the world what peace dividends and the benefits of peace are. It seems to us that the Security Council has the important task of focusing attention on this important aspect, and we trust that the United Nations will continue to provide a humanitarian presence in the country.

We believe that the pressing needs of internally displaced persons require that the reception centres for those persons be properly equipped, that families return to their homes and that they be able to embark on an economically viable way of life. Efforts need to be made not only in terms of financial resources, but also in the areas of human rights, public administration, political agreements and security guarantees on the part of the Angolan Government.

In Angola, we are facing perhaps a more encouraging situation than others that we have addressed here in the Council. We have a Government that has stated its readiness to carry out the necessary reforms and which, moreover, has the potential resources to improve the living standards of the population. While we call for a generous response on the part of donor countries in order to address Angola's needs, my delegation trusts that the Government of the country itself will meet the expectations of the international community in this regard.

Humanitarian tragedies such as that of Angola should never happen again anywhere in the world.

Mrs. Arce de Jeannet (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mexico appreciates the information provided by Mr. Kenzo Oshima concerning the humanitarian situation in Angola. We wish to express our great appreciation to the staff of United Nations humanitarian agencies working to assist the population of that country. Our appreciation also goes to the national and international civil society organizations working in this area, as well as in promoting human rights in Angola.

Mexico believes that responding to the humanitarian needs of the Angolan population is the greatest challenge the Government and the people of Angola face in the current stage of peace-building and national reconciliation, requiring the decisive support of the international community and multilateral organizations, primarily the United Nations.

Given the information we have been given this morning by Mr. Oshima and other information we have received from various agencies and organizations, we are aware of the magnitude of the problem that Angola faces in terms of the return of refugees and the resettlement of internally displaced persons. We would like to ask Mr. Oshima whether regulations and norms for the resettlement of internally displaced persons are being applied in those activities. That is, are efforts actually being made to ensure that returns and resettlements are occurring voluntarily, with the provision of land, tools, seeds and basic physical and social infrastructure? We express this concern because, according to information received from certain organizations, some internally displaced persons who were living in Kuito, the capital of the Bie province, were forcibly returned to their communities when the basic conditions for subsistence did not exist there. Although the case of Kuito is an isolated one, which seems to depart from Government policies, it reflects the risks of premature and spontaneous returns.

We would also like to know whether Mr. Oshima could confirm the information with regard to the number of refugees who will return from Zambia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Namibia this year and next. We have a figure of approximately 470,000 refugees who would be returning to Angola. If that is correct, then we would like to know whether the United Nations, in coordination with the various agencies in the field, is carrying out the planning necessary to ensure that that return and resettlement process is carried out in safe areas and with minimum basic services to ensure the survival of the refugees.

We would also like to know whether the United Nations has any more precise information concerning the number of persons requiring provisions from the World Food Programme in order to survive this year. According to information that we have received, apparently there would be between 1 million and 1.5 million persons who would depend on such supplies. In that context, we would like to know whether there are special programmes for the care of malnourished

people, particularly programmes to care for children, since, according to information that we have received, approximately 30 per cent of the child population of Angola is malnourished.

The Mexican delegation also wishes to echo the satisfaction expressed by other delegations this morning concerning the decision of the Angolan Government to ratify the Ottawa Convention on the total prohibition of anti-personnel mines. In the case of Angola, we are mindful of the tremendous effort still required, which should involve the international community and the donor community: without an adequate demining programme, especially for the transport infrastructure, any effort made in the areas of agriculture, human settlements or national reconstruction would be seriously compromised.

Finally, the Mexican delegation wishes to pose a question to Mr. Oshima or perhaps to the representative of Angola. We understand that this week the National Assembly of Angola is considering the new Government budget. Mexico would like to know whether, in the restructuring of the new budget, priority is given to social and humanitarian assistance programmes.

Mr. Tafrov (Bulgaria) (*spoke in French*): First I would like to thank Mr. Oshima for his extremely useful briefing, which is consonant with Bulgaria's conclusions about the humanitarian situation in Angola, which remains disturbing in spite of progress in the political process, which gives cause for optimism.

I do not want to repeat the comments made by others, but I would like to stress the importance of the problem of demining in Angola, which seems to us essential before tackling the other problems.

In his briefing, Mr. Oshima mentioned certain steps the Angolan Government, which is doing its best to respond to the needs of the population, has taken to facilitate the work of the United Nations and its humanitarian agencies. Here I wish to thank the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the World Food Programme in particular, as well as a large number of other international humanitarian organizations that are doing remarkable work in Angola.

First, regarding infrastructure, which remains greatly damaged by years of war, I wonder whether Mr. Oshima could say something about projects that are important for the delivery of humanitarian assistance, in which the Angolan Government could be encouraged to assist in order to make speedy progress. I wonder whether the United Nations is working with the Angolan Government to help it better manage its relationships with international humanitarian organizations, particularly with regard to customs clearance for humanitarian deliveries and simplifying visa requirements.

Mr. Zhang Yishan (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): First, I would like to thank the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Mr. Kenzo Oshima, for his briefing. As he said, the humanitarian situation in Angola is very serious.

As a result of many years of war and turmoil, almost a third of the population has been internally displaced: those four million people are in dire need of assistance from the international community. Thus, there are 4 million internally displaced persons and 2 million others who badly need assistance from the international community. Therefore, the international community has to do its best to provide assistance and relief to the Angolan people.

It is encouraging that post-conflict peace-building is on track; the general situation in Angola is developing positively and prospects for peace also appear to be good. In order to consolidate peace in Angola, the international community must help the Government heal the wounds of war, improve its management, resolve economic difficulties and raise the standard of living of the people.

Mr. Ngoh Ngoh (Cameroon) (*spoke in French*): I will be brief. I, too, wish to thank Mr. Oshima for his detailed briefing and the very useful information he has just given us on the situation in Angola. The signature of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Angola and UNITA turns a new page in the history of this country, which has been traumatized by a long fratricidal war.

But despite the cessation of hostilities, Angola is facing a very disturbing humanitarian situation. We would like to congratulate the Government on its efforts at facing up to it. We also congratulate the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and other humanitarian organizations on the ground for the work they are doing. The magnitude of the needs of the Angolan people indeed calls for additional efforts

from the Government and the international community. The resettlement of internally displaced persons, the rehabilitation of infrastructure and the situation of children are issues that, in the view of my delegation, should draw priority attention.

Another issue that was mentioned by several delegations is mine clearance. This is a crucial issue. I would like Mr. Oshima to give us some information about possible projects to deal with landmines and rehabilitate arable land. We support the recommendations that he has just made in his report. Like other delegations, we eagerly await the report that will be submitted following Ambassador Gambari's visit to Angola.

The President: Let me just say a brief word in my national capacity in thanking Kenzo Oshima. I would also like to welcome the Angolan Permanent Representative to the table.

The United Kingdom is very interested in contributing to improvements in the humanitarian situation in Angola. We have a team there this week from our Department for International Development to help firm up our own ideas with the Government of Angola of where priority needs for assistance might lie. But that is against the background of our fully sharing the need for better or more balanced burden-sharing on this issue.

I think it is worth just pointing out — this is not a specious point — that the full value of the Consolidated Appeal, at $233 million, is the same as bout three weeks of oil revenues for the Angolan Government. Angola is not a poor country. It is a question of coordination of the right resources going into the right places. It is very good to see the Government of Angola and the United Nations working closely together.

We make the same points as others about internally displaced persons. We are very glad that Francis Deng has now worked with the Government of Angola to produce that significant forward step of the Government's adoption of the guiding principles for internal displacement. But I hope that the United Nations will continue to work on the implementation of those guidelines. I hope that Mr. Oshima can let us know that that will be going forward.

Similarly, on landmines, is the Government of Angola going to be working with United Nations landmine clearance agencies in the programme? Again, cooperation and sharing of priorities — under the leadership of the Government of Angola, as Mr. Oshima has said — is very important.

I resume my functions as President of the Council. I would like to give the floor back to the Under-Secretary-General to respond to the comments and questions made.

Mr. Oshima: I would like first of all to thank the members of the Council for their support, particularly the kind, encouraging words said about the work of my Office, the United Nations agencies and partners and generally the humanitarian community active in Angola. This has been very encouraging.

I think that some of the questions raised could perhaps be better answered by the representative of Angola. But I will try to answer them to the extent that I have been able to see things and hear things after being on the ground.

First of all, on the question of access, as I have mentioned, generally, it has considerably improved. There is no doubt about it. The Government has been cooperative in ensuring maximum possible access to populations in need. As for the family quartering areas, out of the 35 or 36 areas that have been established by the Government pursuant to the Memorandum of Understanding, the humanitarian communities have been able to access 31. The multisectoral operations are under way in those areas. I think that that is quite an improvement.

Access restrictions derive not as much from general insecurity — there is a problem of insecurity, of course — as from mine infestation, to which many representatives of the Council have alluded. Angola is one of the most heavily mined countries in the world and has one of the highest rates of landmine injuries per capita. One thing that is clear is that neither the Government nor UNITA has any need for landmines in today's Angola. As mentioned by many delegations, the Government is to be congratulated for recently ratifying the Ottawa Convention. The problem is that mines have been laid over a 30-year period by many different actors.

There is also a problem of coordination with the Government that needs to be addressed. Strengthened coordination at the national and provincial levels is necessary, and additional Government funding will be

welcome. A national mines survey is needed. I understand that the United States has committed $1 million to a landmine impact study that could start later this year.

As far as the United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) funding request is concerned, in the 2002 Consolidated Appeal process, we have requested $6.3 million to address landmine issues relating to humanitarian operations. But no contributions have so far been received. NGOs separately report problems with funding. This is one area in which we clearly need urgent support from the international community to expand mine action and reorient current activities towards mine-risk education for returning populations. At least 7 provinces, which account for approximately 40 per cent of the countryside, are heavily mined. This is indeed a very serious impediment to the promotion of return and resettlement of the displaced population.

Concerning some of the practical issues that we have raised with the Government, such as the repair of roads and bridges, infrastructure, air strips and so forth, these are issues that United Nations agencies have raised over the past years with the Angolan Government. We continue to raise them so that the most serious effort is made to address these very practical issues.

Angola is a vast country. The infrastructure is generally in appalling condition in many parts of the country. Therefore, a lot of humanitarian operations are carried out by air, which comes at a high cost. I believe approximately 60 per cent of humanitarian delivery of assistance is by air, so it is one of the largest humanitarian operations in the world and also the costliest. Repair of roads, bridges and other airstrips — particularly roads and bridges — would therefore be crucial in order to make more resources available for the actual procurement of goods rather than spending resources on air transportation costs.

I raised these issues once again in my meeting with the ministries concerned. We submitted to those ministries a list of high-priority infrastructure repairs, and I think they have taken good note of our concerns as well as of the high-priority repairs that we would like to see take place soon.

As to the question about resettlement programmes, I think it could be better answered by the representative of Angola.

With regard to the demobilization and resettlement of ex-combatant soldiers, we understand that the Government has a plan to complete the demobilization of nearly 80,000 soldiers by 20 July, and that 5,000 of them will be integrated into the Angolan armed forces. In addition, the Angolan Government has requested the World Bank and other actors to develop a demobilization and reintegration programme. So that is very much under consideration, and the Government is actively engaged in planning for it, with support from international organizations such as the World Bank.

As far as the United Nations is concerned, the Organization provides support, as requested by the Government. Thus far, the Government has requested the Organization to assist the families of ex-combatants, and agencies are currently providing emergency assistance in several family areas.

With respect to the time frame for resettlement, we asked that question, but we were not provided with a clear idea as to how the time frame and the details of the resettlement of internally displaced persons are being considered within the Government. I get the impression that very active planning is under way.

Concerning refugees, Angola, as mentioned earlier, has a refugee population of slightly less than half a million in the neighbouring countries. As far as I am aware, the conditions are not yet in place for the organized voluntary return of refugees, although spontaneous repatriation movement has apparently begun in some locations. I understand that the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees is preparing for the return of refugees from neighbouring countries to Angola.

The guidelines for internally displaced persons that the Angolan Government has adopted in its national legislation are commendable, as I mentioned, but it is important that they be actively implemented. To the extent that we are aware, the Government has been cooperative with the United Nations agencies — and, particularly, with my Office, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs — in implementing these principles, not only at the national level but also at the provincial level. So there is an intention to implement them, but clearly, much more needs to be done, given the magnitude of the problems involved.

The President: I should like to thank the Under-Secretary-General for those helpful and interesting clarifications and answers.

When the Secretary-General has submitted his report, to which we look forward, there will be an opportunity for discussion and for further questions and exchanges on the humanitarian issues.

I now give the floor to the Permanent Representative of Angola.

Mr. Gaspar Martins (Angola): First of all, I should like to convey to the Council, and to you particularly, Mr. President, our great appreciation for having convened this meeting, which was to have been a joint briefing that included a review of the Secretary-General's report. The fact that Angola has become such an important subject to the United Nations caused me to arrive slightly late: I was in the next chamber, delivering a statement before the Economic and Social Council, which was also discussing Angola and the very question that Mr. Oshima brought before the Council: the humanitarian situation.

First, I should like to reassure the Council that the Government of Angola will take seriously the recommendations in Mr. Oshima's briefing. The Council will recall that it had recommended that Mr. Oshima visit Angola only a few months ago, in March, when it considered the very serious humanitarian situation before the new developments in Angola. In April, with the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding and the Peace Accord, we saw a different situation emerging in Angola, with the reinforcement of the peace process, and the implementation of the recommendations that the Council has been making for a number of years. Let me say that we are very encouraged by the fact that, very soon, we shall also see a new format for the United Nations presence in Angola. I hope that that will be a way for us to start considering the questions of the reconstruction of the country and the consolidation of peace.

With regard to some of the points that have been raised, including that of burden sharing: for the past two years, the Government of Angola has increased the share of the budget allocated for spending on social programmes. Again that is a trend that must be reinforced. As the President pointed out in his capacity as representative of the United Kingdom, two to three weeks' worth of Angola's oil revenue covers what is requested in the appeal that will soon be launched.

Perhaps we need to take a look at these indicators from a different perspective. This is an evolving situation. It is a situation that has very much become one that calls for a more resounding response by the international community. Very soon — by the end of July, I hope — the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs will launch a new appeal. In responding to that appeal, we would like the international community to look at Angola differently: not as a "rich" country whose resources could cover what is requested in two to three weeks, but as a country that is ready to continue to increase its share in the provision of services.

Let me say that, yes, Angola may be among the countries where the provision of services tends to be more expensive, owing to the need to provide those services by air. One of the key programmes, which was approved immediately and which is currently being implemented, covers bridge, road and airstrip repair. This is so because in some places one cannot use roads due to the need for demining, which must be done in a much more coordinated and forceful way. We are completely determined to do just that.

I would also like to thank the Council for the words expressed with regard to Angola's ratification of the Ottawa Convention. Again, this points to a trend that indicates that we are determined to look at the landmine situation and to deal with it with the international community, rather than continue as in the past.

Again, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for having convened this meeting. I would also like to thank Mr. Oshima for his briefing to the Council. With regard to the recommendations that have been made, the Council can count on the full and determined support of my Government.

The President: I thank the Permanent Representative of Angola for those remarks. We all look forward to enhanced cooperation between the Government of Angola and the United Nations on the issues that we have discussed this morning.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 11.25 a.m.